

# INFANT & TODDLER ORAL HEALTH: TEETHING

## When do teeth begin to form?

Baby teeth (also called primary teeth) begin to form before your baby is born. Teeth start forming at about 5 weeks gestation.

## When will my baby's first tooth appear?

A baby's first tooth will come in between 6-10 months of age. After the first tooth appears, new teeth will begin coming in every few months.

## Are baby teeth important?

Baby teeth are very important for your child's development. Baby teeth are:

- are essential for good nutrition
- are important in your child's appearance
- hold the space for permanent teeth
- promote good speech.

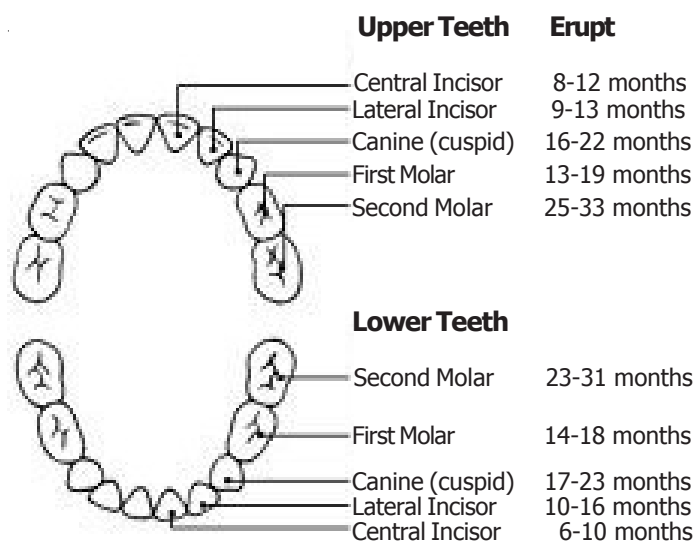
Even before your child's first tooth appears, it is important to begin taking care of your baby's mouth. You can begin by wiping your baby's gums with a clean, soft cloth following each feeding. Once your baby's first tooth appears, start brushing their teeth with a soft infant toothbrush. Do not use toothpaste containing fluoride until your child is able to spit.

## What can I do for my baby's teething pain?

It is common for babies to experience pain when they begin to teeth. You can consult with your child's pediatrician or dentist for recommendations to make your baby more comfortable during this process. Here are some ways to make teething less painful for your baby:

- have your baby chew on a commercial teething ring
- freeze a clean, wet washcloth and give your baby this to chew on
- ask your pediatrician or dentist about medications that are safe for you to give to your baby to help with the pain.

## Primary Teeth Eruption Chart



## BRUSHING TIPS FOR CHILDREN

Always use a soft-bristled, child or infant toothbrush.

Replace your child's toothbrush every three months.

Never allow your child to share toothbrushes, it spreads germs.

### How to Brush Your Child's Teeth

- Place the toothbrush against the gum line at a 45-degree angle. Use a small circular motion to brush your child's teeth and gums.



- Brush back and forth on the chewing surfaces of your child's teeth holding the brush flat.



- Brush the back of your child's teeth.
- Brush your child's teeth after each feeding or at least two times a day. Be sure to brush at bedtime to remove bacteria that can cause decay while your child is sleeping.



## CHECKLIST

Ask your baby's pediatrician or dentist for suggestions to soothe your baby's teething pain.

## FLOSSING TIPS FOR CHILDREN

Flossing cleans between the teeth where a toothbrush can't reach.

You can begin flossing your child's teeth as soon as any two teeth touch.

### How to Floss Your Child's Teeth

- Wrap about 18 inches of floss around the middle fingers. Gently slide the floss between the teeth (don't snap the floss into the gums).



- As the floss reaches the gum line, make a C-shape around the tooth until you feel pressure against your child's tooth.



- Gently scrape the tooth surface with the floss.



- Move the floss as it becomes soiled and repeat the process for each tooth.



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